

04/07/2020

LOGAN COUNTY FAMILY COURT
ESSENTIAL SERVICES & PROCEEDINGS OPERATIONS PLAN
GOVERNOR DEWINE ISSUED STAY AT HOME ORDER ON March 22, 2020
EFFECTIVE MARCH 23rd AT 11:59 PM UNTIL MAY 1ST

To: Sheriff's Office, Bellefontaine Police Department, Commissioners, Attorneys,
Courthouse Security, Media and Children's Services

The following is the Operations Plan for the Court. It is designed to reduce the public traffic in and out of the Courthouse for the safety of all and to permit access to justice by identifying what work is essential and what work can be delayed without harm to families. We thank you for your patience and support during this challenging time. Despite our best efforts, we have not addressed every issue. Please email Administrative Judge Kellogg-Martin at kkellogg-martin@co.logan.oh.us with any questions or concerns you may have.

ASSIGNMENT COMMISSIONER & CLERKS

If the hearing needed is **NOT** on the list of Essential Services & Proceedings, a hearing may **not be scheduled until after July 15th**. However, the hearings can be set earlier once the COVID-19 health crisis is declared to be over. The Court has issued an order permitting law enforcement and other process servers to delay the service of non-essential paperwork for public safety and health concerns.

ESSENTIAL SERVICES & PROCEEDINGS

Accepting phone calls and returning essential and/or emergency phone calls. Pro Se Litigants provide a unique challenge because many do not provide a reliable phone number for staff to contact. Pro Se litigants may come to Court provided they are healthy and they need essential services. Staff must implement social distancing measures.

Due to the "Stay At Home Order", filings **SHALL** be either emailed to Chief Clerk Stafford at estafford@co.logan.oh.us or faxed to 937-292-4121. The original documents should follow up by mail within three business days.

Essential hearings will be set with a focus on appearing by means other than personal attendance whenever possible for pre-trial hearings. Court will not require the filing of formal motions to convert pre-trial hearings from in-person to telephonic or videoconferencing. Final hearings require personal appearance unless Court orders otherwise upon formal motion.

EXCEPTION: The above does NOT apply to Children's Services proceedings because of the time requirements and fundamental issues involved.

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SOCIAL DISTANCING: Under the current need for social distancing, The Common Pleas Judges have agreed that Family Court may use the large General Division Courtroom on the top floor if it is available. The point of contact **FOR NOW is BECKIE SCHMELZER**, who will act as the coordinator between the divisions until Debbie Weiskittle returns to the office. Debbie Weiskittle will be the point of contact upon her return. Rule of thumb: if the hearing involves six or more individuals, check to see if the large courtroom is available.

When a family court hearing can be scheduled in the large courtroom, an **e:mail confirmation** needs shared with employees Schmelzer, Bell, Forsythe, Cook, Weiskittle and Judges Braig & assigned Family Court Judge.

House Bill 197- the order filed on March 27, 2020, this bill emphasizes the Court's complete authority to continue to follow its own emergency orders in every aspect. Matters that can be safely advanced on the docket will continue to move forward.

DOMESTIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT

Civil Protection Orders

Emergency/Ex Parte Requests in Divorce Cases

Dissolutions because of short timeline

Hearings involving safety of children

Hearings involving emergency financial matters

(Court will continue to accept requests for non-emergency temporary orders by submission of motions with supporting affidavits. Also, status hearings and pre-trials are not essential and may be conducted among the parties and counsel with a written status or pre-trial update for filing with the Court without the necessity of a hearing.)

JUVENILE DEPARTMENT

Motion for Ex Parte Orders

CSB Cases – usually involve a minimum of 8 people which doesn't include temporary custodians or support system (refer to Social Distancing section above for cases involving 6+ individuals)

Juvenile Civil Protection Orders

Felony Traffic Violations – **KIDS -n- KEYS & CAR TEENS ARE SUSPENDED**

Temporary Orders involving safety of children or serious financial matters

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Detained Juveniles

Probation Violations & Violations of Court Orders

Arrestment on Contributing Cases

Misdemeanor & Felony Initial Hearings – file written denials

CSEA

Establishment of Child Support

UIFSA

PROBATE DEPARTMENT

Guardianship

Adult Protective Services

Mental Health

Marriage Licenses (only if emergency – military)

PROBATION DEPARTMENT

All reporting at the Probation Department shall be done by phone or videoconferencing unless the Juvenile is instructed to appear. Staff shall maintain records for inputting into CourtView upon ability to work on-site. Delinquency charges, probation violations & violations of court orders must still be processed and set for hearings b/c these are essential proceedings which hold the Juveniles accountable.

TREATMENT DEPARTMENT

All reporting at the Treatment Department shall be done by phone (937) 292-4090 or videoconferencing unless the participant is instructed to appear. Memorial Hall has been closed to foot traffic by the Logan County Commissioners. All drug testing is stopped unless there is special situation requested by the Judges. All drug court assessments and Well Checks will be conducted by phone. All interactions with treatment agencies will be conducted by phone, email, fax, teleconferencing. The department will be staffed with one team member during regular office hours to help direct and support those participants who come to Memorial Hall. A listing of online sober support meetings as been attached to the front door of Memorial Hall for drug court participants. All drug court participants are being contacted via phone to inform them of the court schedules and available resources for them and their families.

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